

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. IV.

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No. 2

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A SUMMER DAY.

At daybreak, in the fresh light, joyfully
The fishermen drew in their laden net;
The shore shone rosy purple, and the sea
Was streaked with violet;
And, pink with sunrise, many a shadowy sail
Lay southward, lighting up the sleeping bay;
And in the west the white moon, still and pale,
Faded before the day.
Silence was everywhere. The rising tide
Slowly filled every cove and inlet small;
A musical, low whisper, multiplied,
You heard, and that was all.
No clouds at dawn, but, as the sun climbed
higher,
White columns, thunderous, splendid, up the
sky
Floated and stood, heaped in his steady fire,
A stately company.
Stealing along the coast from cape to cape,
The weird mirage crept tremulously on,
In many a magic change and wondrous shape,
Throbbing beneath the sun.
At noon the wind rose, swept the glassy sea
To sudden ripple, thrust against the clouds

A strenuous shoulder, gathering steadily
Drove them before in crowds,

Till all the west was dark, and inky black
The level-ruffled water underneath,
And up the wind-cloud tossed,—a ghostly rack,
In many a ragged wreath.

Then sudden roared the thunder, a great peal,
Magnificent, that broke and rolled away;
And down the wind plunged, like a furious keel,
Cleaving the sea to spray,

And brought the rain sweeping o'er land and
sea.

And then was tumult! Lightning sharp and
keen,

Thunder, wind, rain,—a mighty jubilee
The heaven and earth between!

Loud the roused ocean sang, a chorus grand;
A solemn music rolled in undertone
Of waves that broke about on either hand
The little island lone,

Where, joyful in his tempest as his calm,
Held in the hollow of that hand of his,
I joined with heart and soul in God's great
psalm,
Thrilled with a nameless bliss.

Soon lulled the wind, the summer storm soon
died;
The shattered clouds went eastward, drifting
slow;

From the low sun the rain-fringe swept aside,
Bright in his rosy glow,

And wide a splendor streamed through all the
sky;

O'er sea and land one soft, delicious blush,
That touched the gray rocks lightly, tenderly,
A transitory flush.

Warm, odorous gusts blew off the distant land,
With spice of pine woods, breath of hay new-
mown,

O'er miles of waves and sea scents cool and
bland,
Full in our faces blown.

Slow faded the sweet light, and peacefully

The quiet stars came out one after one;

The holy twilight fell upon the sea,

The summer day was done.

Such unalloyed delight its hours had given,

Musing, this thought rose in my grateful
mind,

That God, who watches all things, up in heaven,

With patient eyes and kind,

Saw, and was pleased, perhaps, one child of his

Dared to be happy like the little birds,

Because he gave his children days like this,

Rejoicing beyond words;

Dared, lifting up to him untroubled eyes

In gratitude that worship is, and prayer,

Sing and be glad with ever new surprise,

He made his world so fair!

—*Celia Thaxter.*

KIND WORDS.

Kind words are the music of the world. They have a power which seems to be beyond natural causes, as if they were some angel's song, which had lost its way, and come on earth, and sang on undyingly, smiting the hearts of men with sweetest wounds, and putting for the while an angel's nature into us.

In truth, there is hardly a power on earth equal to them. It seems as if they could almost do what in reality God alone can do; namely, soften the hard and angry hearts of men. Many a friendship, long, loyal, and self-sacrificing, rested at first on no thicker a foundation than a kind word. The two men were not likely to be friends. Perhaps each of them regarded the other's antecedents with somewhat of distrust. They had possibly been set against each other by the circulation of gossip. Or they had been looked upon as rivals, and the success of one was regarded as incompatible with the success of the other. But a kind word—perhaps a mere report of a kind word—has been enough to set all things straight, and to be the commencement of an enduring friendship. The power of kind words is shown also in the destruction of prejudices, however inveterate they may have been. Surely, we must all of us have experienced this ourselves. For a long time we have had prejudices against a person. They seem to us extremely well founded. We have a complete view of the whole case in our own

minds. Some particular circumstances bring us into connection with this man. We see nothing to disabuse us of our prejudices. There is not an approach to any kind of proof, however indirect, that we were either mistaken in forming such a judgment or that we have exaggerated the matter. But kind words pass, and the prejudices thaw away. Right or wrong, there was some reason, or show of reason, for forming them, while there is neither reason, nor show of reason, for their departure. There is no logic in the matter, but a power which is above logic,—the simple, unassisted power of a few kind words. What has been said of prejudices applies equally to quarrels. Kind words will set right things which have got most intricately wrong. In reality an unforgiving heart is a rare monster. Most men get tired of the justest quarrels. Even those quarrels where the quarrel has been all on one side, and which are always the hardest to set right, give way in time to kind words. At first they will be unfairly taken as admissions that we have been in the wrong; then they will be put down to deceit and flattery; then they will irritate by the discomfort of conscience which they will produce in the other; but finally they will succeed in healing the wound that has been so often and so obstinately torn open. All quarrels probably rest on misunderstanding, and only live by silence, which as it were stereotypes the misunderstanding. A misunderstanding which is more than a month old may generally be regarded as incapable of explanation. Renewed explanations become renewed misunderstandings. Kind words, patiently uttered for long together and without visible fruit, are our only hope. They will succeed. They will not explain what has been misunderstood; but they will do what is much better,—make explanation unnecessary, and so avoid the risk, which always accompanies explanations, of reopening old sores.

In all the foregoing instances the power of kind words is remedial. But it can be productive, also. Kind words produce happiness. How often have we ourselves been made happy by kind words, in a manner and to an extent which we are quite unable to explain! No analysis enables us to detect the secret of the power of kind words. Even self-love is found inadequate as a

cause. Now, happiness is a great power of holiness. Thus kind words, by their power of producing happiness, have also a power of producing holiness, and so of winning men to God. Words have a power of their own, both for good and evil, which I believe to be more influential and energetic over our fellow-men than even actions. If I may use such a word when I am speaking of religious subjects, it is by voice and words that men mesmerize each other. Hence it is that the world is converted by the foolishness of preaching. Hence it is that an angry word rankles longer in the heart than an angry gesture; nay, very often even longer than a blow. Thus all that has been said of the power of kindness in general applies with an additional and peculiar force to kind words. They prepare men for conversion. They convert them. They sanctify them. They procure entrance for wholesome counsels into their souls. They blunt temptations. They dissolve the dangerous clouds of gloom and sadness. They are beforehand with evil. They exorcise the devil. Sometimes the conversions they work are gradual, and take time; but more often they are sudden,—more often they are like instantaneous revelations from heaven,—not only unravelling complicated misunderstandings and softening the hardened convictions of years, but giving a divine vocation to the soul. Oh, it would be worth going through fire and water to acquire the right and to find the opportunity of saying kind words!

Surely, then, it gives life quite a peculiar character that it should be gifted with a power so great, even if the exercise of it were difficult and rare. But the facility of this power is a fresh wonder about it, in addition to its greatness. It involves very little self-sacrifice, and, for the most part, none at all. It can be exercised generally without much effort. Moreover, the occasions for it do not lie scattered over life at great distances from each other. They occur continually. They come daily. They are frequent in the day. All these are commonplaces. But, really, it would seem as if very few of us give this power of kind words the consideration which is due to it. So great a power, such a facility in the exercise of it, such a frequency of opportunities for the application of it, and yet the

world still what it is, and we still what we are! It seems incredible. I can only compare it to the innumerable sacraments which inundate our souls with grace, and the inexplicably little modicum of holiness which is the total result of them all; or, again, to the immense amount of knowledge of God which there is in the world, and yet the little worship he receives. Kind words cost us nothing; yet how often do we grudge them! On the few occasions when they do imply some degree of self-sacrifice, they almost instantly repay us a hundred-fold. Take life all through, and we shall find that no natural sweetness of temper, much less any acquired philosophical equanimity, is equal to the support of a uniform habit of kindness. Nevertheless, with the help of grace, the habit of saying kind words is very quickly formed; and, when once formed, it is not speedily lost. I have often thought that unkindness is very much a mental habit,—almost as mental as moral. Observation has confirmed me in this idea, because I have met so many men with unkind heads, and have been fortunate enough never, to my knowledge, to have come across an unkind heart.—*Frederick W. Faber.*

THE STILL HOUR.

FAITH.

We walk by faith, dear Lord, and not by sight;
We cannot follow where thy footsteps led,
Nor hear that voice of tenderness and might,
The voice that calmed the storm and raised the dead.

Yet had we known thee, doubting and weak-hearted,
With thickest veil of worldly thought between,
We might have stood aloof, or soon departed,
And not believed that which our eyes had seen.

But, if we have not seen, and yet believe,
A better blessing thy dear love imparts,
More than thine outward presence to receive,
To find thy spirit formed within our hearts.

—*James Freeman Clarke.*

As one standing on the outskirts of a listening Galilean crowd, a word comes now and then to my hungry ears and my hungrier heart. I turn and tell it again to you, not that ye have not heard it also, but that I may stir you up to ask yourselves: "Do I

then obey this word? Have I ever, have I once, sought to obey it? Am I a pupil of Jesus? Am I a Christian? Hear then of his words."

The Lord says, "*Love your enemies.*" Sayest thou, "*It is impossible*"? Then dost thou mock the word of him who said, "*I am the Truth,*" and hast no part in him. Sayest thou, "*Alas! I cannot*"? Thou sayest true, I doubt not. But hast thou tried whether he who made will not increase the strength put forth to obey him?

The Lord says, "*Be ye perfect.*" Dost thou then aim after perfection, or dost thou excuse thy wilful shortcomings, and say, "*To err is human,*" nor hopest that it may also be found human to grow divine? Then ask thyself—for thou hast good cause—whether thou hast any part in him.

The Lord said, "*Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth.*" My part is not now to preach against the love of money, but to ask you, *Are you laying up for yourselves treasures on earth?* As to what the command means, the honest heart and the dishonest must each settle it in his own way; but, if your heart condemn you, what I have to say is, Call not yourselves Christians, but consider whether you ought not to become disciples indeed. No doubt you can instance this, that, and the other man who does as you do, and of whom yet no man dreams of questioning the Christianity. It matters not a hair: all that goes but to say that you are pagans together. I judge you not. But I ask you to judge your own selves by the words of its Founder.

The Lord said, *"*Take no thought for your life,*" "*Take no thought for the morrow.*" Explain it as you may or can, but ask yourselves: Do I take no thought for my life? Do I take no thought for the morrow? and answer to yourselves whether or not ye are Christians.

The Lord says, "*Judge not.*" Didst thou judge thy neighbor yesterday? Wilt thou judge him again to-morrow? Art thou judging him now in the very heart that within thy bosom sits hearing the words, "*Judge not*"? Or wilt thou ask yet again, "*Who is my neighbor?*" How, then, canst thou look to be of those that shall enter through the gates into the city?

"*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord,*

Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." He will none but those who with him do the will of the Father.—George MacDonald, sermon in "*Thomas Wingfold.*"

THE BIBLE CLASS.

CONTINUATION OF THE SABBATH CONTROVERSY: THE MAN WITH THE WITHERED HAND.

Jesus was now in open controversy with the Pharisees. In all three of the Synoptics the story of the man with the withered hand follows directly after the walk in the corn-field. As usual, Mark adds the graphic touches which are so valuable.

Matthew continues the history thus: "And he departed thence" (from the corn-field?) "and went into their synagogue; and, behold! a man with a withered hand. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath Day? that they might accuse him."

Mark and Luke say "they watched him," but do not record the question, or rather they attribute it to Jesus. "And he saith unto them, Is it lawful on the Sabbath Day to do good or to do harm? to save a life or to kill? But they held their peace. And, when he had looked round about on them in anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart, he saith unto the man," etc. (Mark iii.)

Matthew gives us the argument, "What man shall there be of you that shall have one sheep; and, if this fall into a pit on the Sabbath Day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much, then, is a man of more value than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath Day."

The Rabbinic law in regard to healing on the Sabbath seems to have been that it was permissible when life was in danger, not otherwise. But the man with the withered hand could not have been dangerously ill. The example of the sheep seems to show that the custom, at any rate, was to lift the animal out, should it fall into a pit on the Sabbath. The Rabbinic code ordered that food and drink should be lowered to it. This would seem to cause as much labor on the part of the owner as to lift the poor creature out and let it walk home; and,

perhaps, for this reason the Talmud discusses cases in which it *was* lawful even on the Sabbath to lift an animal out from a pit. It is evident, however, that Jesus drew the attention of his listeners to a *principle*, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm? to save a life or to kill?" Here, as in many other places, the worth of a human being is emphasized.

There was now a bitter hostility toward Jesus. The Pharisees could not say "no" to the question ("Is it lawful to do good and to save a life?"), and they would not say "yes." What did they do? They went out and took counsel "how they might destroy him." Mark says more explicitly than the others, The *Pharisees* went out and straightway took counsel with the *Herodians* how they might destroy him.

This was a very important moment, and the life of Jesus was now in danger. *Both* the parties into which the kingdom was divided, previously opposed to each other, were now united by their common hostility to Jesus.

To understand this, we must remember how Jesus had first appealed to the rulers at Jerusalem, who were allied with the priests and were friendly to the Roman government. Then, losing hope that they would help him, he still looked toward the Pharisees, who were the liberal party, and had the ear of the people. The Pharisees were not wholly unfriendly to him at first. We find him in social relations with them. He dined with them, and they were sometimes present on other occasions mentioned, not in a hostile attitude, but apparently listening to him with interest, as in the house where he healed the paralytic; nor is any hostility recorded at the time when he healed the man who cried out in the synagogue at Capernaum on the same Sabbath that he dined with Peter and healed the mother of Peter's wife.

But now both parties were against him, and what would be his next step?

It is deeply interesting, and should be noticed particularly, that two of the Synoptics give the account of the sending out of the apostles directly after the story of the Sabbath healing. And in Luke we have the "sermon"—probably a very informal address, more like an ordination charge than a discourse—about which so much dis-

cussion has arisen as to whether it is the same as the "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew under another form.

The time at which the sermon in Matthew was preached seems impossible to fix, for there is almost nothing to guide us; but, however that may be, there seems a strong probability that the address in Luke was given at this time,—that is, at the time of the choosing of the apostles and sending them on their mission.

Observe how Luke continues his narrative,—

"And it came to pass in these days that he went out into the mountain to pray, and he continued *all night* in prayer to God."

Jesus knew that he might be murdered at any moment. He felt the great importance of arranging in this extremity how his work should be carried on after his death; and, as in every crisis of his life, he turned to God for help and strength. Is it any wonder that at such a moment he should continue "all night" in prayer? "And *when it was day* he called his disciples; and he chose from them twelve, whom also he named apostles."

That is, the choosing of the apostles followed the night of prayer on the mountain.

"And he came down with them, and stood on a level place," etc.

"And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said":

We must leave the actual teaching for another lesson. I desire here to call attention to the point that the words were addressed to the *apostles* as a sort of missionary sermon. Others were perhaps present, though this does not seem certain.

L. F. C.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.—Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated, all books offered in this department are given, and the postage paid.*

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall I send such a book to such a person?*" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

A four-pound package is the most that can be sent by *mail*. The postage on four pounds of *magazines* is 16 cts., on four pounds of *books* 32 cts.

Postage on magazines and all periodicals (weighing less than four pounds), 1 cent for four ounces; on bound books, 1 cent for two ounces. *Paper books* are now sent by mail at the same rate as magazines, *when issued periodically*.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

The following books are offered by the Women's Alliance of the First Church, Salem. Address Mrs. A. R. Millett, 12½ Hathorne Street, Salem, Mass.:—

"Manual of Phonography"; "Intellectual Philosophy," Champlin; "Elementary Physics"; Johnston's "Natural Philosophy"; Fasquelle's "French Course"; "Geometry and Trigonometry," Legendre; "The Quincy Course of Study in Music, with Suggestions for Teachers"; Wells's "Academic Algebra"; "Oliver Twist," Dickens; "La Famille de Germandre," George Sand; (French Reader); "The English Language," Meiklejohn; "The Use of Models: A Teacher's Assistant for Form Study and Drawing in Primary Schools," Prang.

"Sunday-school Hymn, Tune, and Service Book" (Unitarian); "Youthful Voices" (for Sunday-schools); "The High School Choir."

Any one wishing the United States government reports on Geology, Ethnology, Chemistry, and Agriculture, can secure them by applying to Ulysses Clark, San José, California.

The King's Daughters offer the following books: Buckminster's "Lessons," two volumes; "Law and Lawyers"; "A Book of Hymns for Young Persons"; sheet music for beginners. Address Miss L. F. Young, Groton, Mass.

The Philadelphia Branch offers the following. Address Miss Helen B. Goodwin, 2036 Gratz Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. "A Family Feud," Mrs. A. L. Wister; *Textile World*, 1895; *Textile Record*, 1895; *Harper's Weekly*, 1895; *Housekeeper's Weekly*, 1892; *The Woman's Column*, 1895; *Woman's Progress*, 1895; *To-Day*, 1895 (Universalist paper); *Youth's Companion*, 1895; "Life and Beauties of Fanny Fern"; "A Persuasive to Unity" (Quakerism), Jos. Bancroft.

R. T. Holmen, Manchester, Kansas, will be glad to send these books to any one who will pay postage: "Black Beauty"; "Faith and Unfaith"; "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea"; "Tom Temple's Career," Alger; "Freaks on the Fells," Ballantyne; "A Christmas Carol," Dickens; "A Book about Roses," Hole; "Government Class Book," Young; "Swiss Family Robinson"; miscellaneous copies of the *Christian Register*, the *Unitarian*, and of the *Old Colony Memorial*.

Mrs. George Hollingsworth, Mattapan, offers the Boston *Commonwealth* for 1895.

Any one who would like to receive the *Collector*, a current record of art, bibliography, antiquarianism, etc., published semi-monthly, also the *Outlook*, please address Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston.

Offered by Brattleboro Branch of the Cheerful Letter Exchange:—

"Analytical Speller"; Town's "Sequel to Gradual Reader"; "Third Reader," "Speller and Definer," "Intellectual Algebra," "English Grammar"; Hillard's "Fourth Reader";

Swan's "Third Class Reader"; Walton's "Arithmetic" (2 copies); Greenleaf's "Common School Arithmetic" (2 copies); Davis's "Algebra"; Crosby's "First Lessons in Geometry"; Greene's "Analysis" (2 copies); Cutter's "First Book of Physiology"; Greene's "Introduction to English Grammar"; Adams's "Arithmetic"; Greenleaf's "Algebra"; Ollendorff's "French Grammar." Address Jeannie M. Hall, 14 Asylum Street, Brattleboro, Vermont.

Miss K. E. Phelps, care Mrs. Nat. Messer, New London, New Hampshire, offers the following: "In His Name" (2 copies); "Pilgrim's Progress" (2 copies); "Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (2 copies); "Twice-told Tales," Hawthorne; Grimms' "Fairy Tales"; "Rob Roy," Scott; "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass., offers some more copies of "Our New Mistress," by Miss Yonge; also "The Heir of Redclyffe" and "Henrietta's Wish," by the same author; and one copy each of the following books: "The Schönberg-Cotta Family"; "On the Heights," by Auerbach; "The Tour of the World in Eighty Days," Jules Verne; "Stories for Young Housekeepers," T. S. Arthur; "The Story of Ida"; "Queechy," Miss Warner; "Classic Tales," Maria Edgeworth; "Anti-slavery Days," James Freeman Clarke.

Devotional Books.

"The Cup-bearer," "Christus Victor," "Helps to Devout Living," "Thoughts that Breathe," Dean Stanley; "The Lord's Supper," Lucretia P. Hale; "Grains of Gold"; "The Earnest Communicant"; "Selections from Channing"; "Hymns for Young Children"; "Hymn and Tune Book" (Unitarian Association); several Question Books for Sunday-schools.

Educational.

Edwards's "First Lessons in Grammar"; Alger's Murray's "Grammar"; Alger's Murray's "Exercises," Tower's "Grammar."

REQUESTS.

READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING.

We are sorry to state that our Book Club secretary, Mrs. Hallett, has been obliged to give up the work for the next few months. Until farther notice

requests (as well as offers) may be sent to MRS. W. B. NICHOLS, 3 WEBSTER STREET, ALLSTON, MASS., who has kindly taken Mrs. Hallett's place for the summer.

Libraries.

Standing requests for libraries from:—

Rev. George H. Taylor, Rocky Ford, Colorado;

Mrs. O. A. Langston, Sidney, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Cayuta, Schuyler County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama;

Mrs. Isadore E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon.

Mrs. Stowell, Mrs. Jayne, and Mrs. Miner, all need children's books. Mrs. Stowell also asks for books for a mining population (many are educated people). Mr. Graves asks for a Sunday-school and parish library, Mr. Rhoden for an industrial school for colored children.

(If any address is omitted that should be in this list of standing requests, we shall be glad to insert it in the next number.)

Books for the Anamosa Church Library, formerly sent to Rev. Charles Graves, may now be sent to Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa.

The Sidney Library is the Bibb Library, moved three miles to a somewhat better situation.

Mrs. Rice teaches in a Sunday-school in a lonely region where there is no library, and would be glad to have books interesting to boys.

I am far off in the woods, no neighbors or churches near me. My three-year-old Ada is all the company I have, when my husband is away at work. I am not a novel-reader, but like good solid reading. "Homeward Path," "Stepping Heavenward," "Light out of Darkness,"—these books and similar ones would be very acceptable.

I am an Adventist, but am not a member of any church. I wish you sisters could see our lovely woods in all its glory. Mrs. Indiana Cleaveland, Olympia, Washington.

I live on the Chehalis River, and have no way to go to church. My husband and I are very fond of reading. I am not able to buy books or papers. Would like "Barnaby Rudge," "David Copperfield," or any of Bertha Clay's books. If any one can send me the *Arena* after reading it, I will be very grateful. Mrs. L. B. Daniels, Independence, Lewis County, Washington.

I am living in an isolated part of our State, debarred from social and church privileges, which I have always been accustomed to. I am somewhat of a "shut-in," having been sick nearly all the winter, fighting against consumption.

My husband's business is such that he has to be away from me all day until 9 p.m. I can attend to my domestic duties, and find pleasure in them. I often long for something to read. I would enjoy the *Ladies' Home Journal* or any good magazine. Books or papers will be acceptable. I have a darling baby boy, eight months old; and I don't know what I should do without him. I sometimes fear we both love him too well. Mrs. E. R. Abbitt, Handsom's Depot, Virginia.

W. F. Hardy, Mt. Vernon, N.H., would like a book on civil engineering.

Mrs. N. D. Huggins, Valley Farm, Sicily, Ohio, asks for *Scribner's Magazine*, 1894.

Frank Curtin, Olympia, Washington, would like a "Life of Washington."

Miss Kate E. Beckett, Dorp, Logan County, Nebraska, asks for "Little Women," "Little Men," and "Jo's Boys."

Reading matter suitable for a family of young children will be gratefully received. *Youth's Companion* and *Harper's Young People* especially desired. E. P. Roe's and Bulwer Lytton's works will be read and circulated by parents of same family. Mrs. Sue Quisenberry, Young's Post-office, Virginia.

I received the book, "The Story of Ida," that Miss Clarke sent. I have not had any reading sent me for a long time, and I am too poor to buy. I would be so thankful for any good papers, books, or magazines. I am not able to work, and reading is my only enjoyment. I always lend and give

away all the reading that I get. Mrs. Mary L. Richardson, Glade Creek, Tennessee.

Miss Kate Devine, Olympia, Washington, asks for the *Mayflower* intact for 1895. Also the year 1894 would be acceptable.

I am an orphan and an invalid, twenty-eight years old. Have been very weak and sickly since childhood, and for over seven years have been confined to my bed with spinal and heart trouble. I would be so glad if any one could send me the paper called the *Christian Herald* for the year 1895. Would be very thankful for any religious books or papers. Libbie Como, Watervliet Centre, Albany County, New York.

Mrs. T. C. Edwards, Bloomfield, Sonoma County, California, would like very much to receive Dr. Hale's "Workingmen's Homes."

Mrs. Eleanor Puckett, Powder Mills, Hart County, Kentucky, asks for "Ivanhoe" and any of Mrs. Holmes's works.

Mrs. Emily Bailey, Uptonville, Kentucky, an invalid who is situated where she cannot get reading, and cannot afford to buy, would like any good reading matter.

Mrs. Mary E. Stevenson, West Bloomfield, Waushara County, Wisconsin, a mother of five children, Walter, seventeen, and four girls, the youngest seven years, would like good, instructive reading.

Mrs. M. J. Brooks, Augustine Springs, Logan County, Kansas, wishes reading for large and small boys.

I am living far from the railroad, and see very little of the world. I shall be so grateful for instructive reading matter for children, how grateful you cannot know until you are shut off from all libraries, and too poor to buy. Mrs. Ella Hall, New York, Henderson County, Texas.

J. A. Guilbert, Augustine Springs, Logan County, Kansas, asks for standard novels.

Mrs. Susie R. Thornton, Madisonville, Virginia, would be glad to receive any good reading matter.

Mrs. Orin Reed, Ogalalla, Neb., would like a small Bible with clear, good print.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

Often in my reading I come upon passages that I should like to read to the dear *Cheerful Letter* mothers, who are trying their best to make pleasant homes in lonely places. To-day I write down a few extracts from the "Journal Intime" of Amiel, the Swiss Emerson, as he has been called. Unlike our countryman, Amiel never knew the joys of wife, home, and children of his own. His life was that of the lonely student. To his friends it seemed a failure, and it was only after his death and the publication of his "Journal" that they or the world knew either the man or the philosopher.

Here is the first quotation:—

"2d May, 1852 (Sunday).—Passed more than an hour in the garden with the children. I made them closely examine the flowers, the shrubs, the grasshoppers, the snails, in order to practise them in observation, in wonder, in kindness.

"How enormously important are these first conversations of childhood! I felt it this morning with a sort of religious terror. Innocence and childhood are sacred. The sower who casts in the seed, the father or mother casting in the fruitful word, are accomplishing a pontifical act, and ought to perform it with religious awe, with prayer and gravity; for they are laboring at the kingdom of God. All seed-sowing is a mysterious thing, whether the seed fall into the earth or into souls. Man is a husbandman. His whole work, rightly understood, is to develop life, to sow it everywhere."

"The ideal which the wife and mother makes for herself, the manner in which she understands duty and life, contain the fate of the community. Her faith becomes the star of the conjugal ship, and her love the animating principle that fashions the future of all belonging to her. Woman is the salvation or destruction of the family. She carries its destinies in the folds of her mantle."

"9th October, 1872.—I have been taking tea at the M's. These English homes are very attractive. They are the recompense and the result of a long-lived civilization and of an ideal untiringly pursued. What ideal? That of a moral order, founded on

respect for self and for others, and on reverence for duty,—in a word, upon personal worth and dignity. The master shows consideration to the guests, the children are deferential to their parents; and every one and everything has its place. They understand both how to command and how to obey. The little world is well governed, and seems to go of itself. Duty is the *genius loci*, but duty tinged with a reserve and self-control, which is the English characteristic. The children are the great test of this domestic system. They are happy, smiling, trustful, and yet no trouble. One feels that they know themselves to be loved, but that they know also that they must obey. Our children behave like masters in the house; and, when any definite order comes to limit their encroachments, they see in it an abuse of power,—an arbitrary act. Why? Because it is their principle to believe that everything turns round them. Our children may be gentle and affectionate; but they are not grateful, and they know nothing of self-control.

"How do English mothers attain this result? By a rule which is impersonal, inviolable, and firm. In other words, by law, which forms man for liberty, while arbitrary decree only leads to rebellion and attempts at emancipation. This method has the immense advantage of forming characters which are restive under arbitrary authority, and yet amenable to justice, conscious of what is due to them and what they owe to others, watchful over conscience, and practised in self-government. In every English child one feels something of the national motto, 'God and my right'; and in every English household one has a sense that the home is a citadel, or, better still, a ship, in which every one has his place. Naturally, in such a world the value set on family life corresponds with the cost of producing it. It is sweet to those whose efforts maintain it."

MARIE GOZZALDI.

Clarens, Switzerland.

Dear *Cheerful Letter* Friends,—Perhaps a few words from one who, having borne the "heat and burden of the day," has reached a point where a clearer view is to be enjoyed

than is possible to those in the thick of the world's battle, may be helpful to other discouraged mothers, as well as to Mrs. Hardin, whose plaint I read in the last *Cheerful Letter*.

She says, "What is a poor mother to do, who is trying to train up her children to do right, when they are daily beset by just such examples?" etc.

Dear friend, do not give so much value to outside influence and so little to home training. You can mould your children's morals and manners in spite of what they see others do. How many eminent men owe their greatness to their mothers, while very few are helped upward by outside influence *against* the mother! A mother's influence is God's own gift.

Teach your children politeness *at home*, and, above all, train them to practise the Golden Rule; for that is the secret of good manners. Do not think so much of what people think of you. Most likely you are too sensitive (and that makes one act awkwardly). In large towns people have no time to notice what others do, and it is better to be accused of lack of style than lack of better qualities.

Do not allow your children to *expect* or *receive* pay for doing little favors. If necessary to earn money, let them *work* at whatever they can do, but not trade on kindnesses.

Few people notice children, but those who do not are seldom "children-haters"; and, if wrong is done by them, it is one of the wrongs "wrought for want of thought," and not from evil intent. I think it better for children not to be noticed in the way people usually notice them, as they soon learn to expect attention, and are injured by it.

Let each mother ask God's help, and then leave the result in his hands. AUNTIE.

FOR BUSY MOTHERS.

Hints for Rainy Days, No. 2.

The children are out of pictures, and restless. If you have time, pry open the wires that bind your magazines, and take off all advertising matter at the back, bend the wires back, and put a little paste on the cover, and replace it. If done with care, it

could hardly be noticed, and, when sent away to shut-ins, there would be less matter that was of no moment to pay freight upon. In fact, mother and children can very wisely work together some rainy day, and fix all the magazines. After the pictures have all been cut or the children tire of them, send them on to some shut-in who would like to make a scrap-book of just pictures. Or, if the child wishes, and will paste them neatly, let him do it himself. A seed catalogue makes a splendid scrap-book. Pry open the wires, and take off half the leaves, and bend them back same as before. Let them leave all pretty pictures uncovered; and, if the work is carefully done, it will be a picture book all the more valuable because made by individual labor. Put on a cover of stout paper or cloth,—always a cloth back,—and put the very nicest picture on the outside. This will lead to voting.

F. C. D.

LETTER TO SHUT-INS.

My dear Friends,—The days have lengthened to weeks and months since my last letter, the date of which I do not recall; but the snow must, I think, have been on the ground, and to-day it is white with blossoms. For the high wind, alas! has all too quickly stripped the trees of their glory. The cherry, the pear, and the peach trees have invited all our adoration for the past three days. They have seemed to say, "Love us all you can to-day, for to-morrow we shall be only a memory"; and one hates to realize that a whole year must be lived before this joy and beauty can come again to our eyes.

But they have left their promise. Already hope is born. We know that life follows death, the fruit the bud; and we learn to wait for the autumn fulness. By nature's methods the watchful eye is trained into the high ways of the spirit. My dear friend Celia Thaxter always wrote and talked so reverently of these wonders of seed and blossom. Do you remember her ecstasy over the poppy-seed, that "tiny casket where lie folded roots, stalks, leaves, and flowers,—all that make a plant, as gigantic in proportion to the bounds that confine it as the oak is to the acorn"? "This miracle of the seed," she goes on to say in her "Island Garden,"

"whether winged like the dandelion and thistle to fly on every breeze afar, or caught in the wool of cattle or the garments of men, to be borne away and spread in all directions over the land, is most inspiring and interesting." I am reminded, as I quote her loving, tender enthusiasm from that charming book, of an astonishing statement which I read long ago, and which it may interest you to have me repeat to you here, illustrative as it is of the marvellous life-force enfolded in a tiny seed.

Two thousand years ago, says the narrative, there might have been seen at Laurium a certain yellow flower which flourished in the golden age of Greece, and faded with the greatness of her people. For when the piles of rubbish and scoræ were removed, and the fresh air and sunlight played upon the soil below, we are told that the seeds, long buried, revived; and a little flower, unknown to the botanists of this century, sprang forth, and to-day blossoms and lives as the Flower of Laurium. Think you not this is most wonderful and interesting? and is it not sweetly typical of those spiritual truths, buried perhaps for ages, covered up by dogma, all overgrown and hidden by life's too all-absorbing cares, but never lost, only waiting to be discerned, as Saint Paul has it, to the eye of the spirit?

These summer days turn us inward as well as outward, do you not think so, my friends? In this month of May we, in New England, are most suddenly and unexpectedly launched into weather which opens our windows and doors, puts out the piazza chairs, and swings our hammocks. We ask ourselves, What shall our summer reading be? for, if only a half-hour each day, as perhaps is possible to many an invalid, one may choose wisely. There is no end, you know, to the books of the day,—from history, biography, science, art, and poetry down to the most trashy novel. The magazines, too, are legion; but from them it is not difficult to select,—doubtless their titles are familiar to you: the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Century*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper's*, *New England*, etc.; and in each one finds much that is valuable. I often wish, as I read them week after week, that you would make a definite appeal for one most to your taste. For let me assure you that the ladies in charge of the *Cheerful Letter* cor-

respondence will heartily respond to your wishes.

We all want you to feel that our sympathy goes out to you in the limitations of your lives, and gladly would we share with you our enjoyments. Yours truly,

EDEN.

Please address Mrs. Leonard Ware, Walnut Avenue, Roxbury, Mass.

ANSWERS TO LETTERS.

1. "Please omit my request from the Book Club, as I did not understand your rules."

Answer.—The editor has nothing to do with preparing the Book Club: she merely corrects the proof. Your request should have gone to the Book Club. See directions.

2. "I send you a copy of *Babyhood*, thinking you may like to use part of an article in it."

Answer.—The Editor has taken *Babyhood* for a number of years. It is not worth while to send her magazines, as she has access to all the leading periodicals. Send only articles suitably prepared for printing.

3. "I think you are *perhaps* sending me a copy of *The Cheerful Letter*. I now have 50 cents which I will enclose to you."

Answer.—We appreciate the thoughtfulness of your enclosing an envelope already stamped and addressed. But we will explain that the editor herself never sends *The Cheerful Letter*. All the subscriptions ought to go directly to the treasurer. If sent directly, she will see that all are credited rightly, and the copies sent free will go to new names.

We have received an earnest request to print a paragraph condemning the habit of wearing birds and wings as ornaments.

We are in perfect accord with the sentiment of our correspondent in regard to this foolish and cruel fashion. But we doubt the wisdom of introducing the subject into *The Cheerful Letter*. Many of our readers, perhaps most of those to whom *The Cheerful Letter* is especially addressed, are too poor to wear ornaments of any kind. A large number find it hard to obtain food and clothing. It seems like a sarcasm to warn them against an expensive fashion. We will compromise by offering to send tracts on this subject to any one willing to read them. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass., until October 1.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The personal address of our treasurer will be Miss Louise Howe, Box 21, Nahant, Mass., during the months of July, August, and September. But subscriptions may be addressed to her or left for her at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., *at any season.*

Please do not send notices of discontinuance nor changes of address to the EDITOR, but to the TREASURER, as above.

The address of the Editor will be Magnolia, Mass., until October 1.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who in the future write to us for books to send the name of some minister as a reference,—when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

We fear that some of our subscribers have the impression that by subscribing for *The Cheerful Letter* they will be sure to receive books. The Book Club has proved an attractive department of our paper; and many of our subscribers are interested in sending books to those who are unable otherwise to obtain them. But we engage only to keep the Book Club open for offers and requests, and that under certain conditions.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents

or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

N.B.—PLEASE READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING FOR BOOKS.

The editor receives nearly every day notes which should go to the Book Club secretary (Mrs. Hallett), the treasurer (Miss Howe), or the secretary (Miss Langmaid). This greatly and needlessly increases her work. She would therefore request all readers of *The Cheerful Letter* before they address her to be kind enough to READ THE FOLLOWING

DIRECTIONS.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, Box 21, Nahant, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

EDITOR OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals may be sent to the treasurer as above. The subscription is fifty cents a year.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Nichols; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Ellen R. Dewson, Quincy, Mass. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper, in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Will all subscribers or receivers of *The Cheerful Letter*, whose copy does not come regularly or comes not correctly addressed, be kind enough to notify Miss Louise Howe, as above.

Send all notices of *changes of address and requests for discontinuance* to Miss Howe. Please do not send these notices to the editor, as it causes delay in the correction.